

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7056

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 12971

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ASEAN

SUBJECT: ASEAN CONTACTS WITH THE US AND ESTABLISHMENT OF ASEAN
SECRETARIAT

REF: A. BANGKOK 27181 B. SINGAPORE 4462 C. MANILA 15279

1. AMBASSADOR MADE HIS INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON NEW SECRETARY
GENERAL ASEAN, LT. GEN. H. R. DHARSONO, ON OCTOBER 4. IN THE
COURSE OF THE CONVERSATION, THE FOLLOWING POINTS OF INTEREST
EMERGED CONCERNING ASEAN CONTACTS WITH THE US AND OTHER COUN-
TRIES, AS WELL AS ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SECRETARIAT.

2. DHARSONO STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT ASEAN RELATIONSHIPS
WITH OTHER REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OR INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES HAD
BEEN, OR WERE TO BE, INITIALLY OPENED BY A SPECIFIC ASEAN
COUNTRY. IN THE CASE OF JAPAN, INDONESIA WAS RESPONSIBLE.

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IN THE CASE OF NEW ZEALAND, IT WAS SINGAPORE. FOR AUSTRALIA,

IT WAS MALAYSIA. BANGKOK HANDLES RELATIONS WITH ESCAP. FINALLY, PHILIPPINES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ASEAN/CANADIAN TALKS TO BE INITIATED SHORTLY AND WILL ALSO EVENTUALLY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ASEAN/US CONTACTS. THE EEC IS NOT HANDLED BY AN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY SINCE IT IS ALREADY COVERED BY SCAN.

3. WITH REGARD TO THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT, IT IS PRESENTLY STILL ONLY A TWO PERSON OPERATION HEADED BY DHARSONO, AS SECRETARY GENERAL, AND AN INDONESIAN LADY, MRS. WIDODO, AS HIS DEPUTY. THE EVENTUAL SECRETARIAT WILL HAVE THREE DIRECTORS FOR (A) ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, (B) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND (C) SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL AFFAIRS. UNDER THESE WILL BE FOUR STAFF OFFICES. THUS FAR, ONLY THE DIRECTOR AND HIS ASSISTANT HAVE BEEN NAMED FOR THE OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. BOTH ARE THAI BUT THEIR DATES OF ARRIVAL IN INDONESIA ARE UNKNOWN.

4. ACCORDING TO SECRETARY GENERAL DHARSONO, HE PRESENTLY LOOKS UPON HIMSELF AND HIS SECRETARIAT AS A CHIEF OF STAFF, WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTERS AT THE HEAD OF ASEAN AND WITH THE STANDING COMMITTEE AS THE DEPUTY HEAD. THEREFORE, HE SEES THE STANDING COMMITTEE AS THE EXECUTIVE HEAD WITH THE SECRETARIAT AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE BODY. NEVERTHELESS, HE BELIEVES THAT EVENTUALLY THE STANDING COMMITTEE AND THE SECRETARIAT OF ASEAN MAY WELL MERGE FOR THE SAKE OF OPERATING EFFICIENCY. WHILE IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT IS STILL NOT FUNCTIONING, DHARSONO POINTED OUT THAT IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF MEETINGS AT SENIOR OFFICIAL LEVEL TO IMPLEMENT BALI SUMMIT DECISIONS AND THAT OTHER GROUPS CAN BE EXPECTED TO MEET MORE FREQUENTLY IN THE FUTURE. HE FORESEES THE SLOWEST PROGRESS IN THE SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL FIELDS.

5. DHARSONO DEPARTS OCTOBER 5 FOR BANGKOK FOR MEETINGS WITH ESCAP. HE EXPRESSED REGRETS THAT AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE, WHOM HE KNEW IN SAIGON, WOULD BE ABSENT DURING THIS VISIT BUT LOOKS FORWARD TO SEEING HIM AT FUTURE DATE.
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